

Foreword

Every day in school districts and communities across this state, organizations, businesses, community groups, faith groups, government agencies, colleges and universities, and individuals work in harmony with schools to support a common vision for all our children. And today in particular, the effort of South Carolina's citizens is needed to help improve the academic achievement of African-American children.

The report that follows here is a call to action to address the achievement gap and disparities as they relate to the success of African-American children. The data and other statistics presented in this document are the major areas of concern.

We must act deliberately, and with determination, to shape initiatives that will have a positive impact for the State's children. These initiatives must be broad based and must be given the degree of commitment necessary to make them a strong and lasting force.

I commend Vince Ford, chairman of the African-American Student Achievement Committee (AASAC), members of the Committee, and the work groups for giving of their time and expertise to address this issue. The recommendations contained in this document are far-reaching and systemic. This report is only the beginning, however. If *all* our children are to be successful, they will need our assistance.

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